

GOOD NEWS, MOSTLY

# Fate Held Surprises For Cuban Captives

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MIAMI, Fla., Dec. 25 (AP)—Homecoming held surprises for some of the Cuban invasion prisoners.

Eugenio Sardina, for example, got off the shuttle plane from Havana and found his brother, Jorge, a Roman Catholic priest in Madrid, waiting for him.

The brother had made the long trip to tell Eugenio their father died four months ago in Havana. Eugenio, 40, a leader of the April, 1961, invasion, had been held incommunicado in the Isle of Pines for the past seven months. He was never told of his father's death.

Rene Luis Pelly, 28, arrived at Dinner Key Auditorium for the first reunion with his family, and was introduced to his 5-month-old twin nephews, Felix and Jose Solaun. They had been flown from Rochester, N. Y., for the occasion.

## \$2,000 Windfall

One young bachelor got the word that he had more than \$2,000 in the bank as a result of his 20-month imprisonment. The United States Government had continued paying refugee relief checks to prisoners who had once lived here, even those without dependents.

In this case, a friend here had banked the checks.

Although some of the tension built up through the long vigil of Sunday by a nine-hour delay in the arrival of the first prisoners of war had eased by the middle of yesterday, Homestead Air Force Base south of Miami was still the scene of emotional incidents.

Sergio Carillo, a Negro who was assistant to one of the Roman Catholic chaplains in Brigade 2506—the Bay of Pigs invasion force—dropped to his knees and kissed the airstrip pavement.

Victor Cardenas, unable to

contain his emotion, collapsed from excitement before he reached the bus waiting to take the men to the Immigration Service processing center at the air base. He sobbed piteously as Border Patrol troopers helped him aboard the bus.

Heart-rending scenes were repeated over and over at Dinner Key auditorium, the receiving center for the men coming in from the air base. Men pale from long months of confinement and inadequate diet wept openly as they showered wives, children, fathers and mothers with kisses.

## Families Reunited

Men stared happily at infant sons and daughters they had never seen before. Mothers, tears streaming down their faces, gave shrill shouts of joy at the sight of sons free from Communist prisons.

One arriving prisoner, 34-year-old Raul Leal, shouted for joy as he saw his 14-month-old son, Raul, Jr., for the first time, and pronounced himself "very happy, especially about this little package of joy." His wife Nina, smiling through tears, worried about her husband as he hugged the child fiercely.

"He seems to have lost weight," she murmured.

Occasionally among the prisoners was one whose hardships had made him a stretcher case.

Borne from the rescue aircraft on a litter.

Despite the rigors of prison life, however, and despite the poor diet which left them thin and weak, most of the men seemed healthy. Many leaving the planes could scarcely wait to leap from the ramp and get the feel of free land under their feet. To assure themselves it was all true.

## Prisoners Reticent

Many of the prisoners were hesitant to tell reporters about their experiences. They were afraid of making trouble for their companions still in Cuba waiting their turn to fly out.

Eduardo Correa was typical. He described how he had gotten involved in the invasion by joining the Frente Revolucionario, an erstwhile exile organization headed by Manuel Antonio de Varona, a former Cuban premier.

"The Frente offered me the opportunity to join the invasion force and flew me to Guatemala to train," Mr. Correa said. But he wouldn't answer questions about who

owned the plane or what had happened during training.

"I can't talk about that," he said. "We can't say anything while some of our comrades are still in Cuba. Anything could happen."

Mr. Correa came out on the fifth of the 10 flights to Homestead Air Force Base.

## Leaders Were Last

The last planeload of prisoners seemed to draw more warm embraces and tears than the others, not only because completed the exchange, but because the invasion leaders had waited until the others were out before they came.

Nevertheless, the very last prisoner off the plane—Luis Morse Delgado—had to sidestep to avoid a crowd more interested in seeing and hearing James B. Donovan, the New York lawyer who had negotiated the exchange.

Mr. Morse, a tall, thin man, was crying as he walked toward a bus. He had his arm around his son, Luis, who had gone to the invasion, too. Luis was released last April with 59 other sick and wounded. He wore a gray glove on his disfigured left hand.